

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DHHS Nurse Chosen as a Public Health Nurse Leader

One of 25 in nation selected for Leadership Development Program

Note: Photo available upon request

Lincoln – Kathy Karsting, BA, RN, MPH with Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services' Division of Public Health, is one of just 25 nurses from across the country selected as a Public Health Nurse Leader (PHNL) by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF). She will participate in a two-year leadership development program designed to strengthen the capacity of senior public health nurses to improve population health, address social determinants of health, respond to emerging trends in health and health care, influence policy, and lead collaboration in their states and communities.

The program's goal is to support nurses who are ready to lead public health departments in building a Culture of Health in their communities. Since PHNLs participate in partnerships across all sectors and disciplines that lead to collaborative action, they can leverage new and existing opportunities for even healthier communities. As part of the [Future of Nursing: Campaign for Action](#), the PHNLs will work closely with the Action Coalitions in their states.

"It's an honor to be selected for this program. I look forward to strengthening my skills so I can do even more to improve the health of children and families in Nebraska, while helping advance the nursing profession," said Karsting. "I know this experience will deepen my involvement in shaping the future of public health nursing to meet the needs of a changing society and a changing health care system. It's an exciting opportunity to work with other nurse leaders and Nebraska Action Coalition partners and set a strong example for nurses considering a fulfilling career in public service."

Karsting has worked for DHHS' Division of Public Health for eight years, first as a school nurse consultant and now as program manager and supervisor for Maternal, Child, and Adolescent Health Programs. She is a graduate of Mary Lanning Hospital School of Nursing in Hastings. She earned her Bachelor's degree in Natural Sciences from Johns Hopkins University and a Master's in Public Health from the University of Minnesota.

"At RWJF, we are working to build a Culture of Health that enables everyone in the United States to live the healthiest lives possible, supported by a system in which nurses are essential partners in providing care and promoting health," said Susan Hassmiller, PhD, RN, FAAN, RWJF's senior adviser for nursing and director of the *Campaign for Action*—a joint initiative of RWJF and AARP. "We are so proud of all 25 nurses accepted into this program and excited about the many ways they will strengthen their state Action

Coalitions by bringing public health expertise to their work. Every one of the nurses in this program will help make their communities healthier and our health care system stronger.”

RWJF’s *Public Health Nurse Leaders* program was open to registered nurses who hold leadership positions in governmental public health organizations. Its goal is to help the PHNLs develop their leadership skills and connections with key influencers so they can build and spread a Culture of Health. Participating nurses will spend their first year focused on individual leadership development. Second-year activities are designed to enhance the leadership competencies and coaching skills of both the nurses in this program and key members of the Action Coalition in their states.

In addition to Karsting, the other Public Health Nurse Leaders selected for this program are from: Montgomery, Ala.; Phoenix, Ariz.; Little Rock, Ark.; Lakeport, Calif.; Los Angeles, Calif.; Marietta, Ga.; Honolulu, Hawaii; Belleville, Ill.; Mason City, Iowa; Hutchinson, Kan.; Paulina, La.; Baltimore, Md.; St. Cloud, Minn.; Jackson, Miss.; Jefferson City, Mo.; Santa Fe, N.M.; Syracuse, N.Y.; Charlotte, N.C.; Columbus, Ohio; Marysville, Ohio; Austin, Texas; Brownsville, Texas; Seattle, Wash.; and Martinsburg, W.Va.